

Iron County Register.

By ELI D. AKE.

IRONTON, : : : MISSOURI

WINTER ON "LIZZARD CRICK."

Crick is frozen over now,
Bridged with ice an' snow;
Down the valley you can bend
Winds 'em howl an' blow.
Branches whippin' back an' forth;
Snowdrifts glisten white;
Wintertime on "Lizzard Crick"
Is a glorious sight.
Rabbits bobbin' thro' the wood
Huntin' fur bare ground;
Squirrels snug in hollow trees,
Foxes nosin' round.
Fur a bite to eat, "Coons an'
Woodchucks burred tight;
Wintertime on "Lizzard Crick"
Is a glorious sight.
Hunters trampin' o'er the hills,
Foxhounds bayin' far;
Fishermen down in the bend
Where the pickin' are,
Campfire smoke a-curlin' up,
Logs a-burnin' bright;
Wintertime on "Lizzard Crick"
Is a glorious sight.
—Joe Coe, in N. Y. Sun.



How the Witch of La Balme Was Avenged.

TOWARD the close of day the snow ceased falling, the wind suddenly veered into the north, and its gusts cut like blows from a switch. Night fell; the silver light of the winter moon flooded the sky, lit up the ermine helmets of the Vabre and of Baffin, and was reflected from the ice-covered rocks of the gorge which overhung the raging Agout.

Just as the door of a wayside inn opened with a great rattling of chains, and the landlady stepped out on the threshold, a horseman rode around a turn in the road, and stopped in front of the door of the village inn, his horse snorting with terror. The woman hastily summoned a servant, while the traveler, dismounting, exclaimed, brusquely: "Hollo! Here's Jone-en-Fleur! Wine and fire, my good woman! Tell your boy to give my horse a bountiful supper, and to see whether he is not wounded in the flank."

"Holy Mother!" cried Thiebaude; "what a plight you are in, seigneur! Your corselet and sleeves and even the knot on your sword-hilt, are dyed with blood and dirt!"

"My Astoroth choke every beast of them!" shouted Amalric. "They have ruined my best doublet. I look more horrible than the Vabre butcher!"

Angry and crestfallen, the reister laid his heavy gun on the table, and sat down before the roaring fire—a genuine Christmas blaze. Half a dozen carousers, sitting at one end of the room, resumed their interrupted game of cards, whispering timidly to each other, as if they stood in awe of the new-comer. When his steaming drink was set before him, Amalric related his adventure to the hostess.

"It is a bright night, to be sure, on account of the moon. But what a road, ventre de lezard—chamas, torrents, precipices, snowdrifts, and, in the ravines, all the wolves in Cevennes, fiercer and sturrier than the Calvinists! After I left Vabre, they contented themselves with following me, watching for a misstep of my horse. Near Theronde, I had to slacken my speed a little, as it would have been suicide to travel fast. Then a famished creature leaped on Argant's back and I had trouble in getting him off; I had to use my dagger. And look at the tourteaux on my doublet! At a distance, one would take me for Guillaume de Montpellier's herald!"

Some of the players, leaving the game, had drawn near the fireside. One of them ventured to raise his voice and question the formidable reister.

"Monseigneur, do you think it would be unsafe to go to Albignier to-night?" "You would certainly never reach the end of your journey, whether you traveled on foot or horseback. Stay here, if you value your rustic hides; Jone-en-Fleur can say your midnight mass for you."

"Isn't your lordship going to order a battue soon for the famished beasts?" "The first one will be called before the Epiphany; all the wolf hunters of the neighborhood will then be summoned."

"But if monseigneur would condescend to put himself at the head of our rabattues to-morrow—"

"Silence, knave! I hunt with you? See those cowardly fies, Jone-en-Fleur!" exclaimed Amalric, with insulting contempt. "Is there a man here who could pass the Red Gibbet at night without dying with fear?"

A thrill of terror passed over the audience; heads dropped; no one replied.

"The Red Gibbet!" exclaimed the hostess, crossing herself; "but it is—"

"Occupied! I know that very well! It was about a week ago—wasn't it?—that we hung the old witch of La Balme, that old hag who practiced witchcraft and howled every one's fortune at him."

"L'Armasiere?" queried Jone-en-Fleur, crossing herself again, and glancing furtively at the door, which had just opened and closed noiselessly.

"Exactly! At this season she will keep for a long time, and will serve as a scarecrow on the Ferrieres road. Yesterday Argant shied and nearly threw me into the Agout under the old hag's hooked nose."

"Seigneur Captain," a trembling voice was now heard to say, "I dare go to the Red Gibbet!"

The reister started in surprise, and turned fiercely upon the speaker; he was a youth, almost a child, whose large, dark eyes shone out from his pale face with an expression of perfect fearlessness. "Here's a whelp of a dangerous sort!" cried the captain. "Does he come here often, Mistress Thiebaude?"

"No, monseigneur."

"Who is his master? Does any one here know him?"

"We took him in to-night for the first time," stammered Thiebaude, under the compelling influence of the boy's magnetic glance. "We never saw him before."

"Come here, my bold fellow. Where do you come from?" "From the forest of Montagnole." "But before that?" "From the caves of Angles." "Where did you get that hang-dog look? Have you been poaching on our lands?"

"I have no other trade, captain." At this unexpected reply, so quietly made, a stupor fell upon all in the room; Amalric himself was disarmed by the boy's audacity.

"Ventre-Mahon!" he growled, half laughing and half angry; "you shall enter my service. My war page let himself get hung at La Salveta. Are you truly willing to go to the Red Gibbet to-night?"

"I am."

"Alone?"

"Alone."

"How shall I know it?"

"I will wait for you there, since you are to pass that way in an hour."

"The wolves will leave nothing of you except your carcass."

"You might lead me your gun."

"So you know how to handle that thing, do you? Let me see you load it, you rascal."

The boy smiled confidently; he grasped the heavy weapon with the dexterity of an old soldier; to the officer's surprise he unloaded it, then reloaded it, all the maneuvers being so manifestly familiar to him that Amalric could not help showing admiration.

"If you can shoot the gun as well as you load it," he cried, "it would be pleasant to be your target! At 40 paces you must be able to blow the kernel out of a nut, or the brains out of a trespasser."

"Easily, monseigneur."

"And at the first shot you could bring down the most nimble game, I'll wager."

"Dozens of your hares could bear witness to that, monseigneur," replied the young poacher, strangely bent on provocation as bold as it was uncalculated. This was the master-stroke. The drinkers exchanged glances of consternation and terror at the furious expression on the face of the Seigneur de Vabre.

"Viper!" he shouted, "you shall join the old woman on the Red Gibbet, with a caveat of hemp, just like hers!"

He rose as he spoke, and stood threateningly over the boy, who made no effort to avoid the soldier's raised fist. Amalric paused in astonishment at this defiance. "Why do you confess all this to me, you robber?" he asked at length, inwardly pleased at such a display of courage. "I like brave hearts, you suit me perfectly. Here's the gun; wait for me out there. If the wolves press you too hard climb up on the arm of the gallows; the old witch will keep you company. I'll warrant she'll not be talkative, but if her presence annoys you, send her into the Agout with a kick!"

The boy became livid; his lips trembled and his eyes fairly blazed. He grasped the gun offered him, and without a word went out into the clear, frosty night.

"By Hercules!" cried Amalric; "there's a man for you, you cowards! That's what I call having a heart in one's breast and blood in one's veins."

One of the peasants now ventured to offer a reply, which somewhat disturbed the adventurous cavalier. "To be sure, monseigneur! But there's a Spanish musket, too, which you will probably never see on your rack again."

"What do you mean? Do you think that that young rascal—"

"It was a clever way for him to get firearms. At any rate, the gun is in skillful hands, as your wild boasts will know to their cost."

Amalric, half credulous, now swore like a pagan. But where could he go to search for the robber? He drank his hot wine, and no one dared risk exasperating him further. When he was well warmed, he wrapped his cloak about him, leaped into his saddle, and rode away in the moonlight. Reassured by his departure, the other guests resumed their carousal, while Thiebaude anxiously listened for sounds outside.

Amalric rode along at a brisk pace over the snow already hardened by the intense cold. The moon shone brightly in the pale sky. The roaring and rushing Agout flowed rapidly along. The continuous, mournful howling of wolves, repeated by the echoes of the mountain, sounded like a lament over the buried landscape. The horse, not yet recovered from the fright received from the Theronde wolf, shied at every isolated bush and every dark turn in the road. Guided by a hand of iron, he fairly flew along the dangerous precipices.

Being unarmed, Amalric anxiously scanned the dark hedges among which the road wound about on the mountain side.

To reassure himself, he whistled the air of an old Venetian march, not without many false notes, however. His horse, growing more and more excited, would certainly have broken the neck of the musician, if the latter had persisted in his efforts.

To repress the impatience which devoured him, the captain next evoked the images of the two women he was soon to meet; one, a beautiful blonde of the Flemish type; the other, a charming brunette. With these two noble dames he was to take communion at the chapel this Christmas eve, and afterward feast at the board of the wealthy Azais de Ferrieres, the greatest baron in the country. With soldierly stupidity he repeated to himself the gallant remarks which he intended to address to these beauties; he had learned them for the purpose from the Seneschal de Castres, who made pretensions to being a wit, and who was much better equipped with platitudes than with ideas.

In spite of his application, Amalric could with difficulty keep before him the vision of the two profiles. In their place all his misdeeds—hangings without trial, rapine and violence—rose before him like so many ghosts. The gibbets which dotted the highways for leagues around bore witness to his summary way of dealing with offenders.

But, recently, the sorceress of La Balme had predicted that he would himself hang on the last gibbet he had set up on the Ferrieres road, and he had summarily hung her to the tree, without any fear of her supernatural powers.

He certainly would not die by hanging; he, the brave soldier, whose glance alone terrorized the mountaineers of the region. But he was not so sure that, some fine winter's night, during one of his frequent expeditions, always for a wicked purpose, an ambuscade of outraged peasants would not leave his lifeless body by the wayside. And what a sinister night the present one was, to be sure; how thoughtlessly he had allowed himself to be disarmed by a poacher, a mere child at that! A thrill of fear passed over him. As he rode around a turn in the road, the Red Gibbet loomed up before him.

An exclamation escaped the reister's lips as he recognized the vagabond of Luzieres perched on the ghostly tree, the moonlight reflecting from the shining metal of the gun he held in his hands. He had not for a moment believed that the boy would keep his word; the surprise he felt was mingled with joy at the thought of not being alone in the icy waste.

"So you are here!" he exclaimed. "A brute of a peasant back there took you for a thief; you might shoot him for practice at big game. It is settled then. You are to be my page and the chief archer of my company. Has my musket been of use to you in keeping off the wolves?"

"Not yet, monseigneur," replied the boy, trembling with cold, doubtless.

"Were there no animals on the road?"

"There were many, monseigneur, with eyes like blazing furnaces. They followed me up, without daring to touch me; I walked along singing at the top of my voice, beating the measure with the click of the musket."

"An excellent way of keeping the cowards at bay; a shot would have been better, however."

"I saved that for something better."

"What?"

"You shall soon see, monseigneur."

"You must be cold up there on your perch; you should have warmed yourself up by giving the brutes a taste of saltpetre and lead."

The boy clambered down, and walked slowly toward the captain. "I could not hit the wolf I wanted to kill."

"Which one was it?" questioned Amalric, looking about as if expecting to see glaring eyes.

"A large one that I don't want to miss."

A gust of wind cut the captain's face so sharply that he swore a great oath and exclaimed: "Jump on behind and we will go. I will take you with me to Ferrieres, since you are henceforth to be in my service; if I leave you here, nothing will be left of you by to-morrow. If the old wolf you have in mind comes near us, I give you permission to kill him at once."

"Let him die then!" exclaimed the boy, taking sudden aim at the captain. A sharp report broke the silence of the night. The reister, struck in the heart, fell heavily in the snow.

The boy then grasped Argant's bridle and fastened it securely to a strong root. With granite firmness, he climbed upon the gibbet. Leaning out over the gulf, he uncoiled a rope which was wound around his waist, and tried to fasten it to the body hanging there, to draw it toward him. As he worked, he murmured: "You shall be avenged, grandmother, and you shall be buried in consecrated ground. I told Thiebaude this night that you would be avenged before the dawn."

But even as he spoke, the body of the woman, so long exposed to cold and storm, dropped to pieces, and, falling from rock to rock, at last disappeared in the tumultuous waters of the Agout.

Just at that moment a bell rang out, not far away; its clear music resounded through the night air like a prayer voiced in the distance, celebrating the nativity which promises to the humble blessings to be realized, and to the wicked a chastisement for their iniquities. The vagabond, leaning over the gulf, made the sign of redemption; then, descending, he went up to the body of the soldier, which was already stiff.

Approaching howls warned him to hasten with his task. He dragged the corpse to the gibbet, and by means of a slip knot, drew it up to the beam lately occupied by the other corpse. It swayed to and fro in the moonlight in a sort of funeral dance; the gibbet creaked and a pack of wolves rushed out from the hedges, attracted by the scent of blood.

Crazed with terror, Argant kicked vigorously at his agile foes. One of them had already sprung into the saddle, and was about to close his jaws on the charger's neck, when, swinging the musket around, the boy broke the beast's neck with a terrific blow; then, mounting the horse, he gave his life to the keeping of the terrified animal's instinct. The noble creature sprang away like an arrow in the direction of the Luzieres, followed by a pack of howling wolves; the captain's body swayed in the moonlight, while the silver bells of Ferrieres sent their joyous Christmas peals down through the echoing valley.—Translated from the French of P. B. Gheusi by H. Twitcheil.

In a Red Handkerchief.

"When I came to this town, 20 years ago," said the man with the more than ample waistcoat, "all my earthly possessions were wrapped up in a red bandana handkerchief."

"And now you own that factory on the edge of the town and 200 acres of land?"

"Yes."

"May I ask what you carried in the red bandana handkerchief?" asked one more curious than the others.

"Six thousand pounds in cash and government bonds," he responded, reluctantly, for the wholly spoiled the story.—London Tit-Bits.

A Spirited Expression.

"Your eyes," stammered the wooer, "are intoxicating to me."

The heartless damsel laughed roughly at this.

"For your own good," she hinted, "I should advise you to sign the pledge."

It took some moments for him to grasp the idea that this was his conge; then, resenting her chaffing, he arose from his knees and observed:

"Pardon me, but you interrupted my remark. I was about to say that your eyes are intoxicating because they have a wry look."—Judge.

NUNS LEAVE OLD CONVENT.

Carmelite Convent in San Juan, Porto Rico, Vacated After Three Centuries' Occupancy.

For the first time in 258 years the feet of the worldly tread the floors of the ancient Carmelite convent in San Juan, and the nuns who were sheltered in the old structure have gone forever from the capital of Porto Rico, and the shadow of the cathedral, says a recent San Juan Globe-Democrat. Fifteen of them were transported by steamer and overland to San German, where better quarters have been provided for them. Some of the nuns are very old and feeble and some are young girls who have recently entered the convent. Many of them entered the convent when they were young girls, and are now old women.

No one enters their apartments. When one of their number dies, the nuns themselves bury their dead with their own peculiar ceremonies, doing all the work incident to the interment, the cemetery being in the immediate premises of the convent.

During the time of the bombardment of the city by Admiral Sampson the nuns were removed from the little convent building for a few days, and were taken care of in Rio Piedras, but with this only exception, it is said, the nuns of this convent have never left the seclusion.

This is the only order of this kind on the island, and these nuns occupy their new quarters in San German possibly never to again be disturbed in their perpetual devotion to God for another epoch of centuries.

It was not intended that any one should know of the movement of the nuns, and that it should be done as secretly as possible after dark, but they had no sooner left the building than it became noised about town, causing quite a stir, for every one knew of the absolute seclusion of these pious worshippers and the character of their devotion and sacrifice.

Special preparations were made on the steamer so that they could be as absolutely secluded there as they have been in the convent. They were in charge of two priests, the pastor of the San German church and Father Canella, of San Juan. The nuns made an application to Bishop Blenk some time ago to be transferred, as the building which they occupied is falling down and needs repairs very much.

The scene at the pier was one seldom witnessed. When the carriages containing the nuns arrived a crowd flocked to see the veiled women. Many relatives were there and some of the sisters wept bitterly, while others said they were perfectly happy. Sobs and cries, however, predominated, and the gathering was a weird one. The steamer sailed at two o'clock in the morning. The nuns of this order are, perhaps, the most pious and sacrificing of any of the Catholic church. They are wedded to God alone, and when they enter the convent they leave all earthly things behind them, never again to look upon the face of a mortal but themselves. They have some communication with the outside world, but do not see those with whom they communicate. A high screen is arranged over which they can converse with their friends upon certain occasions, but the door between them is never opened, so that they may come in actual contact with even their parents or closest relatives.

The only recorded escape from the Sistine convent in San Juan occurred during Spanish times. Then a pretty young senorita crawled out of a window on the Christo street side to join friends of her lover, a Spanish officer in Cuba. She fell to the sidewalk and broke her leg, but was safely carried away, recovered, and later happily married her cavalier. She is living in Spain.

Sports of Our New Empire.

A Hawaiian polo team will soon invade San Francisco, and the new territory becomes a factor in the sports of the nation, which usually picked up this jewel of the Pacific on its march to the Orient. The Hawaiians have played a series of games between teams from the islands of Kauai and Oahu to pick up the invading team, and the latter won two out of three. They will play the crack Burlingame outfit of California.

It is not to be assumed that this is a native demonstration, for the Hawaiian polo players are as likely a lot of clean-run young Americans as one can find, and they know a lot about polo. This visit points to a future development of sporting relations between Hawaii and her adopted mother country. The climate is too warm for football, but many other forms of outdoor recreation flourish the year around. Honolulu sends scores of its sons to Yale and Harvard, and they take back with them the love of sport that shares with lectures and text books the fruits of the diplomats from the universities.—Illustrated Sporting News.

Shapely Cuban Feet.

Mr. Welsh, of St. Louis, travels for one of the largest shoe stores in the world, their factory turning out 14,000 pairs of shoes daily, to be sent all over the United States, South America, Cuba, Germany and the Philippines. In speaking of pedal extremities in general, Mr. Welsh says: "Cuban girls have the shapeliest feet in the world. Trilby wasn't French. She must have been Cuban—but then she's been dead for years. I can express the beauty of the Cuban girl's foot no better, I think, than by telling you it is the exact opposite of the Chicago woman's foot. I mean by Cuban girls those who come from the better classes—from the Spanish aristocracy who have mingled their blood with the natives. Spanish women on their native heath are not noted for the beauty of their feet. But the Cuban senorita has the perfect instep, ankle and heel which Du Maurier raved about."—Louisville Herald.

Persevering Pauperism.

There are few able-bodied paupers in Holland. A tract of public land containing 5,000 acres is divided into six model farms, to one of which the person applying for public relief is sent. Here he is taught agriculture, and is subsequently permitted to rent a small farm for himself. Holland also has a forced labor colony, to which vagrants are sent to do farm and other work whether they like it or not.

Unsatisfactory.

"It" is the most unsatisfactory word in the English language.

DON'T CARE FOR THE HOUSE.

There Are But Few Men of Wealth Who Care to Enter the Lower Branch of Congress.

The formal announcement which Congressman Powers made while at home that he would not be again a candidate for congress, although no news to his associates and friends here, has occasioned the widest regret. In connection with many similar announcements, says the Boston Transcript, it must be taken as one of the signs of the times which do not augur well for the future of the house as a legislative body.

The fact must be faced that the body has ceased to attract the kind of men that it ought to have. More than Speaker Cannon's defiance of the senate would be necessary to restore the house to the place where a seat in it will be "worth while" for the really big men of the country. Except for the few leaders who dominate the whole thing there is very little for anybody to do. The membership of the house is so large and the acoustic properties in it so bad that no member commands any attention when he speaks unless he happens to be a "born orator." The salary is pitifully small for those who have to live on it.

Membership still has its uses as a stepping-stone for persons who have an eye on the senate, or some other coveted post. A set of rich young men are in consequence taking up congressional seats, notably Pennsylvanians, much as well to do people in the cities are buying up the abandoned farms of New Hampshire. But for men of good opportunities for professional advancement at home there is little in a congressional seat as an end that is worth while, and they are fast finding it out. If they do not know it when they get here they soon become aware of the fact, with the result that changes in the delegations of the most important states, which ought to keep men here long enough to reach places of prominence, are becoming painfully frequent.

Judge De Armond, of Missouri, one of the most thoughtful men of the house, recently remarked to the Transcript correspondent: "Nearly all the work of this session will be in passing appropriation bills, but have you ever thought how absolutely farcical is the place which the house occupies in this proceedings? The committee may report a bill having in it a \$2,000 item for a certain purpose and if it is hanging on the hands of the house considerable debate may develop in committee of the whole over the proposal to reduce this item to \$1,500. Perhaps the lower figure may prevail. The bill goes to the senate, which promptly raises the item to \$3,000. The revised bill, with scores of amendments, comes back to the house. Three men go out on a conference committee to split difference with the senate. They come back and perhaps after two or three trials of strength the house votes to accept a certain conference report which its three representatives have worked out. What become of the old debate between the \$2,000 and the \$1,500? Not one man in the house, except possibly one of the conferees, and I much doubt that, will have the remotest notion of what has been done with this item. The Pineville Academy Debating society might just as well have 'resolved' on the question."

PROTECTED THIRD RAIL.

Prevents Accidents from the Electric Current on Railways That Use It.

A protected third rail, which has so often been advocated for the elevated system in New York city, but has as often been judged a practical impossibility by engineers of the Manhattan Elevated company, is permanently installed for 17 miles on the electric road in Switzerland, between Le Fayet and Chamounix. This protected system, says the New York Press, is entirely successful and has been tested by none of the difficulties put forward by those opposed to its local adoption. The protection is afforded by an insulated box of paraffined beech, which makes contact with the rail impossible except through the narrow slit at the side toward the car, through which the metal connection with the motor of the car is established.

The top of the box is fixed with iron distance pieces which support it only on the off side of the box, thus allowing the above mentioned opening. No connection would be established, therefore, with the live rail unless something was forced in through this slit. Anyone could walk over the rail by stepping on the box with perfect safety. Although it might naturally be supposed that such a support would not possess sufficiently high insulating qualities for the pressure employed to prevent considerable leakage, it is computed that the maximum loss in this system is less than one ampere per yard. However, the leakage, it is asserted, decreases with a fall of rain or snow, owing to this action washing off the dust and accumulations that have taken from the strength of current.

Condensed Eggs.

Condensed eggs are being largely exported to South Africa and are meeting with a ready sale. Fresh eggs are from 85 cents to \$1.80 a dozen in Johannesburg, so the substitute is welcomed. It is prepared by depriving the ordinary fresh egg of its superfluous water and by adding sugar. The mixture is then inclosed in tightly sealed canisters, 15 eggs to the pound. When unsealed the compound with a little added water is whisked rapidly and, according to a British consular report, cannot be told from the fresh egg.

Just the Thing.

Buckle—I hardly know what to do with my son. I don't believe he has a cupful of brains in his head.

Clasp—Why don't you let him take up your business? You have done first rate at it, you know.—Boston Transcript.

Argumentative Persons.

"Goodness! How those two men are swearing at each other."

"Yes, it's pretty fierce."

"What's the matter with them?"

"They're arguing about their respective religious beliefs."—Catholic Standard.

Sunny and Cloudy Places.

The sunniest place in the earth is either the great Sahara or the desert of Arabia. The cloudiest place is in northern Russia, the southwest coast of Peru, or the coast of the French Congo, Africa, all being about the same in this respect.

THE PASSING GYPSY THE GAME COUNTRY

Our Nomads of the Van Are Fast Disappearing.

Modern Conditions Are Against Them — A Picturesque People Who Served a Purpose—How They Live Without Work.

From the gypsies themselves we learn that their ranks are gradually growing thinner. This, they say, is caused by the watchfulness of the immigration officials who send back many an immigrant, who, if permitted to land, would find a place in the tented wagon or van that travels north and south with the changing seasons, and also by the desertion of many men who are drifting into what we would term legitimate callings, though the gypsy will resent any intimation that his is not also legitimate. Few of them join the class of criminals who end their days in prisons.

While the latter is true the owner of chicken yards will not lament the passing of the gypsy, though he removes a picturesque feature from our national cosmopolitanism, and, in his way, has brought pleasure to many a small boy of both city and country.

But modern conditions are against them. It is as though a policeman were continually saying "Move on." Long since the farmer decided that he would no longer let them camp even in the most useless corner of his fields. They used, whenever possible, to pitch their camps on commons, but the local authorities are averse even to that, and they are obliged to pursue their calling, as it were, on sufferance. Not only so, but other things are highly unfavorable to them. In quiet country villages the itinerant vendor used to be a necessity, and from morning till night there was a procession of them went from house to house. Our good friend Autolycus, with his pack well stuffed with "fine nacks for ladies," went singing and jesting, while he palmed off a bunch of blue ribbons for Mary to go to the fair with, and sold a cap or a necktie for her laddie. He supplied her mother with caps and linen and spectacles and snuff boxes, while the father bought from him stuf for a Sunday waistcoat. Then came the clockmaker, selling huge watches that would not go, and spectacles you could not see through, and many other trifles of light description. The linker came shouting "Old pots to mend," and soon drew a concourse of children to watch him at his little fire soldering the cottage kettle and mending broken ware. And when at night they foregather at Poole Nance's store, or its equivalent, we doubt if the beggar's opera they performed was ever quite so brilliant as the one drawn by the imagination of Burns, for the wandering people are a jealous people, and they give point to the adage "Set a thief to catch a thief." Yet they pick up many songs that, though scarcely adapted for the modern drawing room, are not without a wit and character of their own. They address each other in language not blunted and spoiled by modern politeness and convention, but direct, plain, and yet embellished with many choice epithets and fancy phrases. They are, indeed, the outcast of the population, and in a world which is, perhaps, growing over-burdened with industry, they set an example of idleness. The only means of getting bread to which they consciously object is that of working for it. To beg, borrow or steal come as naturally to them as lying; and probably the stern moralist will without the quiver of an eyelid recognize that their race is dead or dying.

On their pilgrimage they leave the law and the commandments to the street-bred people, and though there are rural constables to be dodged, it is an easier game to play than dodging those minions of the law whose business it is to keep order in the town.

"Sorrow take them," says the countryman at sight of their approach, and yet of us, even when reviling these Ishmaels, has not a secret sympathy with them, and a longing that is with difficulty repressed to take what Walt Whitman called the long white road leading any whither?

Not at All Egotistical.

Jillson—Sometimes I almost believe you think yourself the only person in the world.

Bender—That's where you do me an injustice. Of course, I'm the only person worth talking about; but then to say that there are no other persons would be absurd.—Boston Transcript.

THE GYPSIES' CASTLE.

passing of the gypsy, though he removes a picturesque feature from our national cosmopolitanism, and, in his way, has brought pleasure to many a small boy of both city and country.

But modern conditions are against them. It is as though a policeman were continually saying "Move on." Long since the farmer decided that he would no longer let them camp even in the most useless corner of his fields. They used, whenever possible, to pitch their camps on commons, but the local authorities are averse even to that, and they are obliged to pursue their calling, as it were, on sufferance. Not only so, but other things are highly unfavorable to them. In quiet country villages the itinerant vendor used to be a necessity, and from morning till night there was a procession of them went from house to house. Our good friend Autolycus, with his pack well stuffed with "fine nacks for ladies," went singing and jesting, while he palmed off a bunch of